A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, April 12. 1709.

IN my laſt, I trac'd the Original and Progreſs of *Exorbitant Power* in the World, and brought it down to the Preſent Times; it may not perhaps ſeem ſo unneceſſary a Search, when you ſhall ſee what uſe I may make of it. ——

I left this Monſter in the Divided Courts of the *Auſtrian* Family, united in the purſuit of the ſame Deſign, *viz.* oppreſſing their Neighbours; I ſhall not enter far into the Hiſtory of what they did, but ſhall be more particular in what *Europe* did to reduce them——— The King of *Spain* extended his Branch of Power to the invading *England*, the ſetting up the League in *France*, and the oppreſſing his Subjects in the *Netherlands*, in which had he ſucceeded, *Philip* II. had been Maſter of the whole Monarchy of *Spain*, *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland* *Holland*, *Portugal* and *France*; and *Exorbitant Power* would have made fine Havock, indeed, had thoſe Ends been anſwer'd—— But he failed in them all, and like a ſtrong Man, preſuming upon his Strength, he ſunk under the Weight, and is now become the Contempt of *Europe*——— On the other Hand, the *Emperor* fell upon his own Subjects of the Empire, ruin'd the Elector *Palatine*, oppreſs'd the whole Circle of the *Lower Saxony*, engroſs'd the Kingdom of *Bohemia*, and bid fair for extirpating the Proteſtant Religion out of the whole Empire—— But he failed in that Attempt too, and in ſhort, found his own Ruine in the

the too violent Exerciſe of his Exorbitant Power.

Let us ſee with the ſame Brevity, how all this came to paſs; *Philip* II. of *Spain*, in his Attempts to ſupport the Houſe of *Guiſe* in *France*, called then by the Title of the *Holy League*, found a vigorous Enemy in *Henry* IV. of *France*, Grandfather of the Preſent King, who aſſiſted by *England*, reduc'd the League ſeveral times to the laſt extremity, and had ruin'd them at the ſeveral Seiges of *Paris*, had not the Powerful Forces of the *Spaniards* ſupported them; but at laſt, the Great Duke *De Main*, finding that *Spain* aimed at the real Monarchy of *France*, he and the whole Party gradually gave over the War, and one by one made their Peace with the King of *Navarre*; *Spain* loſt all her vaſt expence, a great many brave Troops, and was after a long War, reduc'd to a Neceſſity of ſeeing *France* Eſtabliſh'd in the hand of her Enemy at the Peace of *Vervins*.

His Invaſion of *England*, I need make no Mention of; how his Fleet miſcarry'd in 1688; how the Expence of it broke him as to Wealth, coſting him, as Hiſtory informs us, in Ships, Proviſions, Artillery, Arms, Magazines and Treaſure, ſent for carrying on the Expedition above 40 Millions of Pieces of Eight, and ſo reduc'd his Naval Power, as that he never became formidable at Sea more.

His other Attempt, was upon his own Subjects the *Flemings*, whom he not only ſought to Oppreſs in the higheſt Degree, under the Cruelty and Tyranny of the Duke *D'Alva*, who impoſed the 10*th* Penny, and who boaſted of putting 18000 of the People to Death by the hand of the Hangman——But brought the Inquiſition into that Country, where it had never before got any footing, and ſet to work by Violence, to extirpate the Proteſtant Religion out of thoſe Provinces——The *Flemings*, driven one Part by the Oppreſſion *of their Liberty*, another Part *of their Property*; and a *third, tho' perhaps the leaſt of their Religion*, took Arms under the famous *William* I. the then Prince of *Orange*, and Founder of the Preſent *Dutch* Greatneſs——Theſe Arms were purſu'd with that Animoſity on both Sides, with ſuch Power the *Spaniards* puſh'd his Tyrannical Oppoſition, with ſuch Obſtinacy the Subjects defended their new aſſum'd Liberty, that this War continu'd 40 Year; the King of *Spain* himſelf declar'd, it coſt him 368 Millions of Money; the loſs of Blood may be gueſs'd at, ſince by a Journal I have by me of the Seige of *Oſtend*, that one Town coſt the *Spaniard* near 70000 Men, beſides the loſs within the Town—— And what was the End, but as it is like to be now, the Condemnation of *Exorbitant Power*? The *Dutch* broke quite off, and the *Spaniard* was obliged to acknowledge them a Free State, and the reſt of the *Flemings*, who remained in their Duty, call'd now the *Spaniſh Netherlands*, obtain'd a Confirmation of their Priviledges, Baniſhment of Foreign Troops, total Expulſion of the Inquiſition, and that no Taxes ſhould be raiſed, but by the Conſent and Grant of the States of the Country.

If all theſe Attempts ruin'd *Spain*, and weaken'd them to that Degree we now find them in, it is not to be wonder'd, for the protecting this Fury call'd Exorbitant Power has ruin'd every Nation, that in theſe latter Ages have attempted it, and will continue to do ſo to the End of the World, while the Powers of *Europe* have their Eyes open to Liberty and their own Intereſt.

And now we come to the Empire, the other Branch of *Auſtrian* Greatneſs—— The Proteſtants of *Bohemia* fly to our *James* I. but he, guided by other Councils than thoſe of his own Intereſt, and *Europe*'s Peace, abandon'd himſelf and the Proteſtant Cauſe, and gave the greateſt Blow to the Proteſtant Intereſt at that time in the World, that any *Popiſh* Power could have done by attacking it—— *Bohemia* fell into the mercileſs Hands of the *Auſtrian*; the Proteſtants of the *Lower Saxony* were ruin'd, the Electors of *Saxony* and *Brandenburgh* frighted, the Dukes of *Pomeren* Depoſed, the Princes of the Houſe of *Mecklenburgh* cruſh'd, and Victorious Count *Tilly* was ravaging the Proteſtant Country, to make the ſeveral Princes renounce the Concluſions of *Leipſick*.

In

In this Distress, the Great *Gustavus Adolphus* Lands at *Straelsundt*, but with 12000 Men, falls into *Germany*, takes *Stetin* and all *Pomerania*, marches through *Brandenburgh*, whose Elector at first play'd Fast and Loose with him, joyns the Duke of *Saxony*, and overthrows the whole Imperial Army, under old General *Tilly*; at the great Battle of *Leipsick*, where *Tilly* had the best Army perhaps that ever was beaten in the World, being all old Regiments, beaten to the War, flush'd with Victory, and just come from the terrible Siege and Sack of the City of *Magdenburgh*.

From this Victory, the *Swede* overrun two third Parts of *Germany*, and in less than a Year and three Quarters, extended his Conquest over the *Elb*, the *Oder*, the *Rhine*, and the *Danube* ——Where-ever he came, *Exorbitant Power* fled like a *Parthian* before a *Roman*— Always flying, tho' always fighting—— Here Liberty reviv'd, and this War held on to the Famous Treaty of *Munster*, *viz.* 1632, to 1648. when Exorbitant Power was cast out of the Empire, like the Devil our Saviour cast out of the Man's Son in the Gospel, which threw him down and rent him at parting.

And now wise Men thought this Beast was gone out of the Country; *Turks* and *Tartars*, *Persians*, *Chineses*, and such People might harbour her, and do what they pleased to one another; no Body concern'd themselves much about it, any farther than as they gave any umbrage to these Parts of the World, and threatned the Peace of *Europe*; when of a suddain, she began to show her Grisley Face again in *France*.

France had suffer'd so many Convulsions for a great many Ages before the Days of *Henry* IV. that no Part of the World was more unlikely to entertain this Fugitive —— The Civil Wars with the Protestants, under four Reigns, had Desolated many Parts of the Kingdom; the Holy League had let in the *Spaniard*, and the King of *Navarre* had craved Aid from *England* and *Holland*, and the whole Kingdom had been ravag'd with Foreign Troops, that when *Henry* IV. obtain'd his Crown, the Princes of *Lorrain* who formed the League, seem'd to comply not as beaten, or as weary of their Cause, but as seeing no End of the War, and tyred with the Desolation of their Country.

Hen. IV. Dying by Assassination, and with him the first Great Thoughts of Exorbitant Greatness: His Son an Infant, and at best, a weak and infirm Prince, utterly uncapable of being any Terrour to his Neighbours, had all his Reign taken up with Court-Factions and Party Strife, between the Queen Mother, and the Princes of the Blood; *Katherine De Medicis* and the Cardinal employ'd the whole Politicks of that Country, tho' the Cardinal by his exquisite Conduct, laid much of the National Oeconomy, upon which the Management of *France* has ever since proceeded.

Some little Acquisitions this Prince made in *Italy*, and particularly the wheedling *Pignerol* out of the hands of the Duke of *Savoy*, which he rendred a most impregnable Fortress, and called it the Key of *Italy*: But his main Conquest was that of the Protestants, whose Power he effectually broke in the Reduction of the *Rochellers*—— A Conquest, owing to the wretched Management of *English* and *Dutch* Protestants, who to the Shame of those Days, be it spoken, lent their Ships to destroy their Brethren: *Of which hereafter.*

When the Present King of *France* came to the Crown, the very same Scene began to be acted over again; the King was left an Infant, but just out of his Cradle, *Mary de Medicis* acted exactly her Predecessor *Katherine*, and *Mazarine* possess'd the chief Ministry, as *Richlieu* had done before him, with this Difference, that now they had a Masculine, Vigorous, Fiery Prince to serve, who quickly made himself known to be their Master, and shew'd them their Business was to Obey, not to Instruct him how to Command.

Yet all this while, *Europe* saw no Danger of *French* Power growing Exorbitant, nor had England *acted her Part*, had it been ever so—— But drowned in Luxury, secure and supine, *England* fell in with all her Measures; our Court was acted by *French* Influence; our Prince slept in the Arms of *French* Strumpets; was doz'd with the